

POSITION DESCRIPTION COVER SHEET

REASON FOR THIS POSITION

1. NEW ☒ 2. IDENTICAL ADDITION TO THE ESTABLISHED PD NUMBER ☐ 3. REPLACES PD NUMBER

NHQRSSC47013

RECOMMENDED

4. TITLE **Senior Regional Soil Scientist** 5. PAY PLAN **GS** 6. SERIES **0470** 7. GRADE **13**

8. WORKING TITLE (Optional)

Senior Regional Soil Scientist

9. INCUMBENT (Optional)

OFFICIAL

10. TITLE

Soil Scientist

11. PP	12. SERIES	13. FUNC	14. GRADE	15. DATE Month Day Year	16. I/A <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	17. CLASSIFIER
GS	0470		13			

8. ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE (Agency/Bureau)

1st	Natural Resources Conservation Service	5th
2nd		6th
3rd		7th
4th		8th

SUPERVISOR'S CERTIFICATION

I certify that this is an accurate statement of the major duties and responsibilities of the position and its organizational relationships and that the position is necessary to carry out Government functions for which I am responsible. This certification is made with the knowledge that this information is to be used for statutory purposes relating to appointment and payment of public funds and that false or misleading statements may constitute violations of such statute or their implementing regulations.

19. SUPERVISOR'S SIGNATURE 20. DATE 22. SECOND LEVEL SUPERVISOR'S SIGNATURE 23. DATE

21. SUPERVISOR'S NAME AND TITLE 24. SECOND LEVEL SUPERVISOR'S NAME AND TITLE

FACTOR EVALUATION SYSTEM

FACTOR	25. FLD/BMK	26. POINTS	FACTOR	25. FLD/BMK	26. POINTS
1. Knowledge Required	FL 1-8	1550	6. Personal Contacts	FL 6-3	
2. Supervisory Controls	FL 2-4	450	7. Purpose of Contacts	FL 7- C	180
3. Guidelines	FL 3-4	450	8. Physical Demands	FL 8-2	5
4. Complexity	FL 4-5	325	9. Work Environment	FL 9-2	5
5. Scope and Effect	FL 5-5	325	TOTAL POINTS		3290
GRADE					GS 13

CLASSIFICATION CERTIFICATION

I certify that this position has been classified as required by Title 5, US Code, in conformance with standards published by the OPM or, if no published standard applies directly, consistently with the most applicable published standards.

29. SIGNATURE  30. DATE **05/01/2008**

31. NAME AND TITLE

Darlene Locke, Human Resources Specialist, Employment and Classification Team, Washington, D.C.

32. REMARKS:

33. OPM CERTIFICATION NUMBER

**References:OPM JFS PROFESSIONAL WORK, NATURAL RESOURCES MGT & BIOLOGICAL SCIENCES, SEPT 05
Position is FLSA - Exempt.**

MASTER RECORD/INDIVIDUAL POSITION DATA

THIS SIDE TO BE COMPLETED BY THE CLASSIFIER

A. KEY DATA											
1. FUNCTION (1)		2. DEPT CD. /AGCY-BUR-CD. (4)		3. SON (4)		4. MR. NO. (6)		5. GRADE (2)		6. IP NO. (8)	
		AG 16									

B. MASTER RECORD											
1. PAY PLAN (2)		2. OCC. SERIES (4)		3. OCC. FUNC. CD. (2)		4. OFF. TITLE CD. (5)		5. OFFICIAL TITLE (38)			
GS											
6. HQ. FLD. CD. (1)		7. SUP. CD. (1)		8. CLASS STD. CD. (1)		9. INTERDIS. CD. (1)		10. DT CLASS (6)			
1 = HQ 2 = FLD		1 = Sup. SGEG 3 = Mgr. SGEG 4 = Sup. CSRA		5 = Mgmt. CSRA 6 = Leader LGEG 8 = All Others		X = New Standard Applied Blank = NA		N = No Y = Interdis		MO DAY YEAR	
11. EARLY RET. CD. (1)		12. INACT/ACT (1)		13. DT. ABOL. (6)		14. DT. INACT/REACT (6)		15. AGENCY USE (10)			
1 = Primary 2 = Secondary		3 = Foreign Svc. Blank = NA		I = Inactive A = Active		MO DAY YEAR		MO DAY YEAR			
16. INTERDISCIPLINARY SERIES (40) (4) Per Block											
17. INTERDISCIPLINARY TITLE CODE (50) (5) Per Block											

C. INDIVIDUAL POSITION																			
1. FLSA CD. (1)		2. FIN. DIS. REQ. (1)		3. POS. SCHED. (1)		4. POS. SENS. (1)		5. COMP. LEV. (4)											
E = Exempt N = Nonexempt		0 = None 1 = CD 219 2 = CD 220		3 = SF 278 4 = AD 392 5 = SF 849		A = Sched A B = Sched B C = Sched C		0 = Excepted but not A,B,C		0 = Nonsensitive 1 = Noncritical 2 = Critical Sense									
6. WK. TITLE CODE (4)		7. WK. TITLE (38)																	
8. ORG. STR. CODE (18)								9. VAC REV CODE (1)											
1st		2nd		3rd		4th		5th		6th		7th		8th					
								0 = Position Action No Vacancy A = No Change				B = Lower Grade C = Higher Grade				D = Different title and/or series E = New Position/New FTE			
10. TARGET GD.		11. LANG. REQ. (2)		12. PROJ. DTY. IND. (1)		13. DUTY STATION (9)		14. BUS. CD. (4)		15. DT. LST. AUDIT (6)		16. PAS. IND. (1)		17. DATE EST.					
				Blank = NA Y = Yes		State (2) City (4) County (3)				MO DAY YEAR		Blank=NA 1 = PAS		MO DAY YEAR					
18. GD. BASIS. IND (1)				7 = Equipment Devel. Guide				19. DT.REQ. REC. (6)		20. NTE. DT. (6)		21. POS.ST. BUD (1)							
1 = Rev. when vacant 2 = Impact of Person 3 = Sup./SGEG				4 = Sup./Program 5 = RGE 6 = Policy Analysis G E G				8 = Agency Use 9 = Agency Use ALPHAS = Agency Use		MO DAY YEAR		MO DAY YEAR		Y = Perm N = Other					
22. MAIN. REV./CLASS.ACT. CD. (2) (1st Digit = Activity and 2nd Digit = Results)																			
Normal Act				Maintenance Review Act				Results											
1 = Desk Audit 2 = Sup. Audit 3 = Paper Rev. 4 = PME/Activity Rev.				5 = Desk Audit 6 = Sup. Audit 7 = Paper Rev. 8 = Panel Rev.				1 = No Action Req. 2 = Minor PD Change 3 = New PD Req. 4 = Title Change				5 = Series Change 6 = Pos. Upgrade 7 = Pos. Downgrade 8 = New Pos.				9 = Other			
23. DATE EMP. ASGN. (6)		24. DATE ABOL. (6)		25. INACT/ACT(1)		26. DATE INACT/REACT (6)		27. ACCTG. STAT. (4)		28. INT. ASGN. SER. (4)		29. AGENCY USE (8)							
MO DAY YEAR		MO DAY YEAR		I = Inact. A = Act.		MO DAY YEAR													
30. CLASSIFIER'S SIGNATURE												31. DATE							
32. REMARKS																			

STANDARD POSITION DESCRIPTION

Official Title: Soil Scientist
Working Title: Senior Regional Soil Scientist
Classification: GS-470-13
Number: NHQSRSC47013

Date: May 1, 2008
Classified by: NHQ
Location: State Office

Note: This is a standard position description and can not be modified without the approval from the Human Resources Management Division, Employment & Classification Team.

INTRODUCTION

This position is located in a designated MLRA Regional Office. The incumbent serves as the senior regional technical expert for all phases of soil survey. The incumbent assists the MLRA Leader with ensuring that soil survey production is maintained while also maintaining quality throughout the region. They coordinate all technical phases of soil surveys, including soil classification, identification, mapping, map unit design, production, interpretations, digitizing and database quality, publication, and SSURGO development.

Actively supports and participates in the safety and health program activities as required. Complies with all appropriate safety and health rules and regulations in the performance of assigned tasks.

MAJOR DUTIES

1. Technical Expert (50%)

- a. The incumbent serves as the technical expert for all phases of the soil survey program including soil mapping, soil classification, soil correlation, soil investigations, soil technologies, soil interpretations, development of soil survey reports, and the use, development and maintenance of the National Soil Information System (NASIS). The incumbent is responsible for working with MLRA Project Office Staff, State Soil Scientists, other regional MO staff, and other Federal agencies to develop and monitor a 5 year work plan for the MLRA Soil Survey Areas that describes the needs for soil data quality improvement and new data population.
- b. The incumbent assists the MLRA Leader to monitor soil survey production across the region and works with MLRA Project Office staff, State Soil Scientists, other regional MO staff, other Federal agencies to remove roadblocks and continually improve productivity.
- c. As the Senior Regional Soil Scientist, incumbent applies a regional perspective to resolve differences in technical soil matters between states in order to achieve

consistency and continuity between states and coordinates with adjacent MO and MLRA Soil Survey Offices to achieve a national seamless digital soil survey.

d. The incumbent is responsible for quality assurance by ensuring that quality and technical direction are consistently, and accurately, delivered and implemented at the MLRA Soil Survey Offices. The incumbent conducts periodic oversight checks and technical reviews of work completed by MO and MLRA Soil Survey staffs. These checks and reviews are normally conducted on a catena of soils and series across a broad geographic area in the MO region. The incumbent communicates and interacts with MO Staffs, MLRA Soil Survey Leaders, and State Soil Scientists in the region in order to provide feedback to the MLRA Leader on the consistency and quality of soil surveys.

e. Works with field soil scientists across the region to ensure that work meets all National Cooperative Soil Survey (NCSS) standards. Takes lead in recommending new approaches and developing methodology for solving complex problems marked by controversy. NRCS provides Federal leadership to ensure that all soil surveys are completed according to standards. The incumbent serves as the NRCS regional lead for standards. In that role, the incumbent works closely with staff of the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA), Department of Defense (DOD), National Park Service (NPS), and the U.S. Forest Service (USFS) to ensure consistency and continuity of soil survey on all lands. Incumbent coordinates and provides training and technical advice to soil scientists in these agencies.

2. MLRA Regional Coordination (30%)

a. The Senior Regional Soil Scientist assists the MLRA Leader by coordinating soil investigations, special projects, and geomorphic assistance within the region. Coordinates soil investigation activities including special studies involving cooperating agencies (USEPA, BLM, USFS, ARS, DOT, DOD, etc) and universities within the MLRA region. The incumbent is responsible for coordinating the dissemination and implementation of findings and results of these special investigations and projects in order to improve the productivity of field staffs and technical quality of soil surveys in the region. Communicates and interacts with scientists within the academic community, and within the NRCS, in order to provide guidance to soil scientists and others within the geographic region.

b. Serves as the lead in coordinating collection and population of soil properties including different "states of transition" of an ecological site and the change in soil properties. Coordinates interpretation with NSSC, cooperating agencies, and state soil scientist within the region.

c. The incumbent assists the MLRA Leader by advocating, coordinating, training and consistently implementing new technologies and data that can be used to enhance the soil survey production and soil survey quality in the region such as soil landscape predictive models, remote sensing, GIS and other geospatial systems, and EMI, GPR and other field data collection tools. The focus of this duty is to aggressively implement

the correct technologies for the region to accelerate soil survey production and improve the quality of the soil surveys in the region.

d. Provides training to field soil scientists and others on soil survey field procedures, interpretation of lab data, population and quality assurance of databases, soil correlation procedures, and soil interpretations. Through training and quality assurance activities ensures the production, technical accuracy, and consistency of soil surveys within the geographic area. Provides training on soil survey to range conservationists, foresters, and other disciplines involved in soil survey within the geographic region.

e. Works within a team concept to develop and implement ways to improve the efficiency, effectiveness, and quality of the products and/or services provided to internal and external customers.

3. Policy Development (20%)

a. Develops and recommends policy changes and guidelines for a variety of soil survey technical functions within the area of assignment. Develops and issues guidance for applying standards and interpretive guides to be used by other soil scientists within the MLRA Region. As appropriate, develops specialized regional standards and interpretations, and coordinates them with the appropriate NSSC staff. The incumbent ensures that National and Regional standards are being followed within the Region.

b. The incumbent initiates, coordinates, and reviews revisions to these national and regional standards, and works on ad hoc committees to address national standards issues. Assists the MLRA Team Leader by serving as the principal regional technical liaison with the National Leaders at the National Soil Survey Center (NSSC) to ensure that national soil survey standards are maintained and updated, interpretations are coordinated, and investigations are planned and carried out efficiently.

4. Equal Employment Opportunity and Civil Rights

a. Provides an understanding of Equal Employment Opportunity and Affirmative Employment Programs to ensure their training, career development (including varied work assignments, details, and special developmental assignments), during work team projects and varied assignments are in compliance with regulations. Emphasizes meeting the objectives of equal opportunity and affirmative employment plans and requirements. Ensures that these functions are carried out without regard to race, color, national origin, religion, sex, age or physical or mental handicap.

b. Provides leadership and guidance in the design, development, and maintenance of technical procedures to assure that delivery of NRCS programs and services are carried out without regard to race, color, national origin, religion, sex, age, or handicap. Reviews the implementation of civil rights policies to determine that they are translated into appropriate actions consistent with annual plans of operation in all units under their supervision, as well as by recipients.

Performs other duties as assigned.

CONDITION OF EMPLOYMENT – Must possess and maintain a valid state motor vehicle operator's license for the type of vehicle(s) operated to perform the duties of this position. This will require the operation of a motor vehicle on both public and private roads during daylight hours and occasionally after dark.

FACTOR EVALUATION

1. KNOWLEDGE REQUIRED BY THE POSITION – LEVEL 1-8 (1550 POINTS)

- a. Mastery knowledge of all technical aspects of the soil survey program, including mapping, correlation, classification, investigations, interpretations, database, and publication. Provides technical guidance to field soil scientists and others in map unit design, application of soil standards and classification of soils, and soil interpretation for many uses.
- b. Comprehensive knowledge of agronomy, geology, biology, forestry, and engineering to sufficiently integrate soils information into these disciplines' activities so that soil and water conservation needs are adequately addressed from a coordinated multi-disciplinary approach.
- c. Expert knowledge in landscape/soil/ecological site relationships.
- d. Knowledge of management and leadership techniques in order to assist the MLRA Leader and State Soil Scientists in the areas of the soil survey program.
- e. Comprehensive knowledge of soil landscape inference models, remote sensing and geographic information systems (GIS), and other geospatial technologies in order to direct and provide guidance to contacts throughout the diverse work area.
- f. Ability to develop new approaches to soil survey and interpretation to better improve application of Agency findings in order to direct solutions for extraordinary problems and develop policies or procedures.

2. SUPERVISORY CONTROLS – LEVEL 2-4 (450 POINTS)

- a. The incumbent is under the supervision of the MO Leader/State Soil Scientist, who assigns tasks as contained in the soil survey plan of operations and in the long-range plan of operations. Deadlines for completing work are developed in consultation with MLRA Leader. Due to expertise, the incumbent interprets agency policy on own initiative in terms of established objectives without instruction from supervisor.
- b. Carries out responsibilities and coordinates activities fully independently with other soil scientists or specialists, and with technical support staff specialists such as the

biologist, forester, agronomists, and engineers. Also coordinates independently with other agency specialists. The technical aspects of the incumbent's work are reviewed only from an overall standpoint in terms of feasibility, compatibility with other findings, and expected results. Incumbent is authorized to commit NRCS to courses of action on technical soil matters, including allocation of funds, without prior approval by management.

3. GUIDELINES – LEVEL 3-4 (450 POINTS)

a. Guidelines consist of the National Soils Handbook, Soil Survey Manual, Soil Taxonomy, General Manual, Memorandums of Understanding with other agencies, National Bulletins, memorandums, and other related scientific data sources in agronomy, biology, engineering, and forestry.

b. The guidelines may lack specific guidance or are under revision, requiring the incumbent to apply judgment and experience in interpretation or in developing new methods, criteria, procedures, and/or techniques in the use of soil information by federal, state, and local agencies, as well as the general public. Due to expertise, incumbent must routinely develop new procedures, programs, and methods while not contradicting agency policy.

4. COMPLEXITY – LEVEL 4-5 (325 POINTS)

a. Soil science represents significant interactions and differences in parent material, topography, vegetation, rainfall, and temperature across the MLRA region. The incumbent will be involved in interpreting these soils for use by the NRCS in resource conservation planning by city, county, regional, and state planning bodies for comprehensive planning.

b. The incumbent's assignments will include identification of multiple needs for soil information within the agricultural and urban sectors. The incumbent develops and guides the use of soil information to serve these two diverse use areas with a minimum of conflict. The incumbent independently interprets and evaluates new mapping techniques, proposed interpretations criteria, new manuscripts formats, and provides training in those that are adopted by both NRCS and non-NRCS personnel.

c. Incumbent must assess a wide variety of unusual findings and variations, determining appropriateness often required to research missing data or information. Independently verifies all feasibility in accordance with cutting-edge soil science.

5. SCOPE AND EFFECT - LEVEL 5-5 (325 POINTS)

a. The purpose of the work is to develop soil survey data into publications, manuscripts, guides, and tables that will effectively accelerate the utilization of soil information by users and potential users in NRCS field offices, state conservation and resource agencies, and local planning groups. Soils information must be sound and accurately interpreted.

Errors or inadequacies would seriously impair the effectiveness of NRCS programs in the state and other agency programs. Assesses survey effectiveness, addressing a variety of unusual conditions and problems. Enables NRCS and NCSS to achieve a seamless digital soil survey of the nation.

b. Due to expertise in soils, the incumbent's findings and recommendations impact long-range planning and national policy. Completed work/findings have a definite impact on the work of other experts, development of major soils programs throughout the nation, within and throughout the Agency.

c. Decisions and directions from the incumbent directly affect soil survey production and quality in the multi-state work area.

6. PERSONAL CONTACTS AND PURPOSE – LEVEL 6 AND 3C (180 POINTS)

a. Personal Contacts - Personal contacts are with NRCS employees throughout the agency as well as outside of NRCS, including representatives of tribal, state, and local governments, consulting firms, civic groups, experiment stations, universities, students, and the news media. Contacts are often non-routine, with varying purposes and expected or unexpected results. Incumbent is called upon to present findings at national meetings concerning soil science.

b. Purpose of Contacts - Generally contacts are pursuing mutual goals and are cooperative; however the incumbent must often influence and motivate representatives of Federal, tribal, state, and local governments to accept NRCS programs, policies and procedures. The incumbent must isolate the diverse needs of these groups and resolve conflicts arising from uncoordinated use of the information contacted at this level.

8. PHYSICAL DEMANDS - LEVEL 8-1 (5 POINTS)

The work is usually performed in an office setting and requires only occasional activity during field inspections such as walking, climbing, and bending.

9. WORK ENVIRONMENT – LEVEL 9-1 (5 POINTS)

The work is usually performed in an office environment requiring common sense precautions typical of this setting. Occasionally, work is performed outdoors during field inspections and is subject to weather conditions found nationwide during field season. When exposed to dangerous objects, chemicals, extreme temperatures, etc., exercise safety precautions while performing duties in a manner supportive of a safe and healthy working environment.

Total points = 3290 (Range – 3155-3600)

This position is determined to be exempt from the provisions in the FLSA as defined in 5 CFR 551.204.